

THE JACOBS REPORT

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GOVERNOR POCKET VETOES ACUPUNCTURIST LICENSING BILL

Governor Jennifer Granholm pocket vetoed a bill that would have licensed acupuncturists, one of nine bills left to expire. Unlike vetoed bills, which the governor returns to the Legislature without signature, bills are pocket vetoed when the Legislature has adjourned sine die and are not signed within 14 days of being presented. Most of the Senate bills meeting that fate reached the deadline minutes after the noon Wednesday, December 29 adjournment of the Legislature.

Granholm Press Secretary Liz Boyd said the governor saw no compelling reason to sign the bill. The governor had signed three other licensing bills earlier in the legislative session and wanted to evaluate how those new procedures work before enlarging the role of state government further.

Also killed by the pocket veto was a bill increasing out-of-pocket costs for persons covered by health maintenance organization plans, but which proponents had argued would give businesses needed flexibility to keep health care coverage for employees.

The governor also pocket vetoed a bill (SB 1321) that would have licensed motorcycle dealers.

Also pocket vetoed was SB 1463 which would have eliminated three election districts in the 8th judicial district court in Kalamazoo County.

The other bills that were targeted with pocket vetoes were measures that were part of a marriage preservation package where the governor had already vetoed the main bill. The bills are SB 959, SB 961, SB 963, SB 964 and SB 966.

STATE OF THE STATE DATE TENTATIVE

February 2 is the date penciled in for Governor Jennifer Granholm's third State of the State address, but administration officials aren't marking it down in ink since President George W. Bush is considering the same date for his State of the Union address. If the governor does change the day of her address, it will likely be rescheduled a bit later in February, but still before the 2005-06 executive budget recommendation is presented to the Legislature.

PRENATAL PROTECTION ACT LIKELY SET FOR CHANGE

Rep. Bill Van Regenmorter (R-Jenison), author of the 2001 law dubbed the “Prenatal Protection Act,” said this week that the law should be amended to remove complete immunity for a woman whose fetus is killed in an assault. The call for change follows charges presented against a Macomb County boy whose pregnant girlfriend allowed him to hit her in the abdomen with a baseball bat to induce a miscarriage.

The act, PA 1 of 2001, prescribes penalties for the death of fetus in an assault against the pregnant woman, but it gave immunity to the pregnant woman. That stipulation limited Macomb County Prosecutor Eric Smith’s prosecutorial options. Although the miscarried baby’s mother and father appear to be equally at fault, Mr. Smith can only charge the father under current law.

“We need to update the law,” said Rep. Van Regenmorter. “That will be one of the first things we do in the next session.” The representative, who says that he is already drafting new language, will be in a unique position to implement changes, as he is expected to be named chair of a recombined House Criminal Justice and Judiciary Committee

“What we're going to do is remove any immunity that a woman in this case might have,” Mr. Van Regenmorter said. “I don't think anyone anticipated the set of circumstances that's involved here.”

All Michigan legislation can be tracked at <http://www.legislature.michigan.gov/> .

State Senator Gilda Jacobs represents the 14th Senate District, which includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Franklin, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Families & Human Services Committee and the Economic Development, Small Business & Regulatory Reform Committee. She also serves on the Government Operations and Health Policy Committees.

Constituents of the 14th District may contact Senator Jacobs at sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov or toll-free at 1-888-937-4453.

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